

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

TERM LIMITS

HON. LEE H. HAMILTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 1995

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Speaker, I would like to insert my Washington Report for Wednesday, April 5, 1995, into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

TERM LIMITS

In recent years public frustration with the performance of government has been fueled by various scandals and a lack of progress on the budget deficit and other pressing national issues. I share this frustration. Among the many proposals to alleviate this problem are campaign finance reform, tougher ethics laws, restrictions on lobbyists, and term limits for elected officials. The new congressional leadership has chosen to focus solely on term limits.

Recently the House considered several different versions of a constitutional amendment to limit the number of terms for Members of the House and Senate. Some versions included a 12-year limit for Representatives and Senators; another imposed a shorter 6-year limit on Representatives. Other options would allow states to impose stricter limits if they so desired. None of the amendments received the necessary $\frac{2}{3}$ vote needed for passage.

Supporters of term limits contend that they are necessary to assure a "legislature of citizens", bringing new blood to Washington and competition to the political process. With term limits, Members might not be tempted to protect their legislative careers at the expense of the country. A completely new membership would restore confidence in Congress and promote confidence in Congress and promote bolder decision-making on Capitol Hill. Although supporters of term limits raise some legitimate concerns, in my view the arguments against term limits are more persuasive.

TIME LAG

Term limits advocates argue that changing the Constitution is necessary to get legislators to tackle the tough issues we face as a nation today. Yet the main version they push would have no effect for almost two decades. Once approved by Congress, the term limits amendment would have to be ratified by the states, and they would have 7 years to do so. If ratified, the amendment would only apply to elections after ratification, which means 12 additional years of service for sitting members. Thus the first year in which someone would actually leave office because of term limits could be 19 years from now—the year 2014. This is clearly not an answer to today's problems.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Elections keep Members accountable. Under term limits, however, a large proportion of the House would be ineligible for reelection, and could completely ignore their constituents, missing votes, staying away from their home districts, and lining up lucrative jobs after they leave Congress. This republic has been well-served since its birth by the belief that accountability in elected officials should be enforced by voters through frequent elections. Why should vot-

ers be denied the right to return those who have maintained their public trust? That is why I have also opposed the present constitutional term limits imposed on Presidents. Term limits dilute the accountability of elected officials.

POWER

One unintended consequence of term limits is that by eliminating experience in elected office, power would shift to unelected special interest groups, congressional staff, and federal bureaucrats. In our system of government, power does not simply evaporate; it flows to others—to the unelected and unaccountable. It is hard to imagine a greater advantage for a President or the special interests than to purge Congress of experienced legislators who are experts on certain issues, who understand the workings of government, and who remember the problems of the past.

EXPERIENCE

Term limits penalize experience. No other profession does that, and no other country imposes term limits on national legislators. Our country's founders noted that courage by public officials not to pander to the people requires a self-confidence and credibility that only experience can bring. Experience gives Members the ability to stand up to powerful special interests. The nation benefits from having Members in Congress who debated the Persian Gulf War, health care reform, Watergate, tax reform, and the savings and loan crisis. Experience helps us avoid mistakes of the past. I am not persuaded that in this day of very complicated problems an inexperienced legislature is better than a more professional legislature.

HIGH CONGRESSIONAL TURNOVER

Term limits are unnecessary. Elections work. There is already substantial turnover in the membership of Congress. More than 50% of the House has served less than 5 years, and the average length of service is already less than 12 years. Voters have shaken up Congress a great deal in a short amount of time. Congress is improved by the flow of fresh ideas from these new legislators, just as it is improved by the insights of experience. The best solution is to allow voters to determine the proper balance between freshness and experience.

DEMOCRACY

Term limits are fundamentally undemocratic. Our founding fathers specifically rejected term limits because they limit the choice of the voter to choose who will represent them. Term limits substitute an arbitrary rule for the independent judgement of voters. In effect, the present electoral system provides strong term limits every two years. A citizen who believes a Member of Congress should not serve more than a few years is free to vote against the incumbent, but a law should not prevent other voters from voting for a particular person. If the problem is poor representation, the solution is campaign finance reform and lobbying restrictions, which would expand democracy and limit special interests instead of limiting the voters' choice.

In the end, I do not think that term limits would deal with the causes of frustration with Congress that prompt support for term limits in the first place—certainly not until well into the 21st century. They would do nothing to deliver services better, or cut government waste, or solve any of the social

problems that desperately need solving. We are again looking for a procedural fix when we really need to start dealing with the substantive issues. Term limits are a barometer of the discontent with government that exists around the country, and all Members should heed the warning.

INTRODUCTION OF FOUR BILLS TO IMPROVE FEDERAL CONTRACTING PRACTICES

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 1995

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing four bills to bring some accountability and cast a search light on the elusive, stealth "shadow government." This government we cannot see is the proliferating and largely unmonitored private contract service sector and work force from which the Federal Government procures services. Although a huge \$105 billion Goliath, this sector has emerged unscathed and uncut at a time when deficit reduction has spared few others.

In fact, service contracting constitutes the fastest growing area of Federal Procurement. In the 1980's, Federal officials acted as if they wanted to contract out the entire Government. From fiscal year 1989 to fiscal year 1992 alone, before the Clinton administration came into office, the number of contractors doing business with the Government rose from 62,819 to 82,472. Over that same period, the amount of money shelled out to contractors of all kinds mushroomed from \$184 billion to almost \$200 billion. Service contracts alone account for \$105 billion of the \$200 billion spent each year on outside contracts.

This is a Government-created and financed monster that the OMB itself concedes is out of control. How extraordinary, then, that in a budget which has left no visible stone unturned, this large Federal expenditure has remained hidden in the shadows and has not contributed a single dollar of mandated cuts to deficit reduction, as Federal agencies and employees have. How remarkable that, despite a Government-wide effort to promote efficiency, we have not considered the inefficiency of guaranteeing contractors an invulnerable chunk of tax dollars.

The Clinton administration, to its credit, has worked hard to make service contractors more responsive—for example, by proposing new performance-based standards for existing service contracts. How surprising, then, that the budget the Congress is now considering proposes no cuts in funds allocated for service contracts—thus leaving untouched a huge source of potential savings—while demanding continued sacrifices from the career work force that makes up the "visible government." Thus far, the shadow government has not registered beneath the green eyeshades of budget cutters, including the Congress.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

The time is long past due for overhauling contracting practices. With the four bills I am introducing today, I hope to help begin the process of reinventing Federal contracting just as the rest of our Government is being reinvented.

FULL FEDERAL PAY RAISE

My first bill would cut \$2 billion in Federal agency funds for service contracts and make this money available for pay raises that are due Federal employees next year. Federal employees are again being required to give up part of their statutory pay increased while, again, contract employees paid for the same Federal budget remain untouched. The intent of my first bill is to eliminate the raw discrimination that allows the Government to seek sacrifices for civil servants because they are where we can see them but to give immunity to contract employees because they are out of sight.

Beyond the discrimination against career employees who are denied modest increases promised by statute, current contracting practices are fundamentally bad business. According to a March 1994 GAO report, issuing service contracts and hiring consultants actually costs Federal agencies more than using Federal employees. In 3 of the 9 cases analyzed by GAO, agencies could have saved over 50 percent by keeping the work in-house.

BUYOUTS

My second bill would plug a gaping hole in the landmark buyout legislation we have only just passed. Congress went to extraordinary lengths to ensure that civil servants who were bought out with cash could not be replaced and that the resulting 272,000 reductions in the Federal work force would be permanent. However, as it stands now, the buyout law would allow untold numbers of contract employees to take the places of bought-out Federal employees—substituting shadow government employees for career employees. My bill would amend the Federal Workforce Restructuring Act to prohibit agencies from contracting out work previously done by buyout recipients.

COST COMPARISONS

The reason most often touted for contracting out work is that it is cheaper. The March 1994 GAO study contradicts this assumption, and an OMB study released in January 1994 shows that the cost-saving assumption is often not even tested. Federal agencies do not compare the costs for contracting with the costs of doing work in-house. My third bill would require agencies to make these cost comparisons and would prohibit any agency from entering into an outside service contract if the services could be performed at a lower cost by agency employees.

SIZE OF CONTRACTING WORKFORCE

One of the chief obstacles to regulating the contracting workforce has been the absence of information on the extent of the workforce. In 1988, for example, Congress passed legislation requiring agencies to significantly cut service contracts. However, a subsequent GAO report found that there was no way to know if the agencies had actually complied with the legislation. My fourth bill requires OMB to develop a Government-wide system for determining and reporting the number of nonfederal employees engaged in service contracts.

All four of these bills would provide more systematic ways for monitoring and constraining the expenses associated with contracting

out of services—just as we have insisted for Federal agencies and employees. Efficiency and deficit reduction must not stop at the door of the Federal agency. We need to bring the shadow government into the full light of day so that the sacrifices demanded in the name of reinventing Government may be shared by all employees and by every area of Government.

SUMMARIES OF SERVICE CONTRACTING BILLS INTRODUCED BY CONGRESSWOMAN ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

1. The first bill cuts \$2 billion in Federal agency funds for service contracts and makes this money available for pay raises that are due Federal employees next year. Federal employees are again being required to give up part of their statutory pay increases while, again, contract employees paid from the same Federal budget remain untouched. The intent of this bill is to eliminate this inexplicable discrimination.

2. The second bill amends section 5(g) of the Federal Workforce Restructuring Act of 1994, (Public Law 103-226) to prohibit an agency authorized to offer voluntary separation incentive payments under that Act from contracting out, in whole or in part, the duties previously performed by an employee who separated upon receiving such a payment. This is to ensure that no substitution of shadow government employees for career employees occurs.

3. The third bill prohibits any Executive Branch agency from entering into a service contract if the services to be procured under the contract can be performed at a lower cost by employees of the agency. It requires agencies to perform cost comparisons (contractor cost v. in-house cost) when deciding whether to contract for a service. The requirement applies to contracts entered into after the date of enactment.

4. The fourth bill requires the Director of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to develop a government-wide system for determining the number of persons employed by non-Federal Government entities providing services under service contracts awarded by agencies in the Executive Branch of the Federal Government. It also requires OMB to submit an annual report to the Congress indicating the number of such persons providing services and the number with jobs comparable to those of career Federal employees providing services to agencies.

REPORT TO CONGRESS BY RICHARD H. STALLINGS, OFFICE OF NUCLEAR WASTE NEGOTIATOR

HON. BART GORDON

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 1995

Mr. GORDON. Mr. Speaker, in 1987, Congress created the Office of the Nuclear Waste Negotiator as part of its amendments to the Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982. The goal of this office was to negotiate an agreement with a host site for the storage and disposal of spent nuclear fuel. Congressional action in 1994 terminated authority for the negotiator's office. Today, I am submitting for the RECORD, the last report to Congress by Richard H. Stallings, negotiator, of the Office of the Nuclear Waste Negotiator.

For the past 15 months Mr. Stallings and his staff have worked to help resolve our Nation's spent nuclear fuel storage and disposal problem. This office held numerous expert discussions which produced valuable scientific infor-

mation on possible future uses of spent nuclear fuel. In addition, Mr. Stallings was instrumental in designing and improving the economic development opportunities of the Department of Energy's multipurpose canister [MPC] Program as an integral part of the interim storage facility. As a result of their efforts, I am confident that Congress will be better prepared to consider legislation concerning the management of spent nuclear fuel.

As negotiator, Mr. Stallings also demonstrated the ability for the Department of Energy to develop meaningful communications with potential host States and increased community awareness and understanding of the emotional issues surrounding nuclear fuel. While the authority of Office of the Nuclear Waste Negotiator ended before a host site was designated, I believe it is important for Congress to continue in these educational efforts and open dialog.

I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to Mr. Stallings for his work as nuclear waste negotiator. His findings and expertise are greatly appreciated and will prove invaluable as Congress moves forward with our Spent Nuclear Fuel Management Program for a permanent repository and temporary storage facility.

OFFICE OF THE
NUCLEAR WASTE NEGOTIATOR,
Washington, DC February 8, 1995.

THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE,
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: I am submitting the following as the last report to Congress by the Office of the Nuclear Waste Negotiator.

As a result of a legal cloud over our authority to continue operations, I terminated the mission of the Office on January 21, 1995. In closing the Office prior to completing its legislated mission, I leave with a sense of lost opportunity, although much was accomplished over my short fifteen month term. I hope that this report will encourage those who still believe in finding ways for the Federal government and the states to work together for solutions to challenging and controversial public policy issues.

When Congress created the Office of the Nuclear Waste Negotiator in 1987 as part of its amendments to the Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982, it recognized the possibility that the storage and disposal of the nation's civilian nuclear waste could be accomplished through cooperation. By giving the Office the authority to negotiate an agreement with a state or tribe, Congress was essentially saying to the states, "Reliance on Federal supremacy may not be the only way that we as a nation should deal with this issue." Perhaps the legacy of this Office should be that we demonstrated that the Federal government can work cooperatively and constructively with the states on this issues, if we are only willing to put forth the effort.

THE OFFICE I ASSUMED IN NOVEMBER 1993

Upon confirmation by the Senate in November of 1993, I took charge of an Office that had been in operation since September of 1990. My predecessor had remained in Office until June of 1993, but with the change of Administrations following the 1992 election, the Office was in essentially a suspended operational status from November of 1992 until I was confirmed a year later. This is important for four reasons.

First, for an Office whose entire term is four years and five months, a year hiatus is a very long time. Second, the last year was